



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/732,939	12/11/2003	Frederick W. Ryan JR.	F-489	7296
7590	03/18/2008		EXAMINER	
Brian A. Lemm Pitney Bowes Inc. 35 Waterview Drive P.O. Box 3000 Shelton, CT 06484			LIOU, ERIC	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3628	
			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			03/18/2008	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/732,939	RYAN ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Eric Liou	3628	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 January 2008.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-34 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-34 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
- Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application

6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 1/16/08 has been entered.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 14, 16, 24, and 33 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Objections

3. Claim 12 is objected to because the term "of" should be added after "evidence" in line 2. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1, 3-8, 11-13, 16, 18-24, 26-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moh et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,004,048 in view of Bailey et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,154,734.

6. **As per claims 1 and 16,** Moh teaches a method and a security device to evidence postage for mail pieces comprising:

setting a postage value (Moh: col. 3, lines 35-36; col. 4, lines 62-64);
generating a first indicium based on the postage value (Moh: col. 5, lines 18-25);
storing the first indicium in a buffer (Moh: col. 3, lines 39-41; col. 5, lines 4-10 and 25-27, “First In First Out memory device”);
continuously generating a plurality of subsequent indicium data in immediate succession (Moh: col. 4, lines 64-67; ASIC33 generates image data and outputs this data in a synchronous data stream.; col. 5, lines 18-27; Moh teaches continuously generating a plurality of subsequent indicium data in immediate succession, but does not explicitly teach continuously generating a plurality of subsequent indicia in immediate succession. However, it is noted that Moh teaches a mail handling system that processes a plurality of mailpieces at a high speed. As such, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified the method and security device of Moh to have included continuously generating a plurality of subsequent indicia in immediate succession for the advantage of processing mail more efficiently.) and storing the plurality of subsequent indicium data in the buffer until the buffer is full or a new postage value is set (Moh: col. 3, lines 49-54; col. 6, lines 49-67; col. 7, lines 1-5);
determining if a mail piece is present in the mailing machine (Moh: Figure 1, “11”; col. 6, lines 1-4);

if a mail piece is present, retrieving one of the indicium from the buffer (Moh: col. 5, lines 38-41; col. 6, lines 4-34);

accounting for the indicium in at least one register in the mailing machine (Moh: col. 4, lines 56-60, col. 5, lines 7-10, 21-25, and 30-41); and

using the indicium to provide evidence of postage for the mail piece (Moh: col. 3, lines 30-33; col. 5, lines 48-49).

7. Moh teaches accounting for an indicium prior to generating the indicium (Moh: col. 5, lines 20-25). However, the claim recites generating indicia without accounting and accounting for the indicia at a subsequent time when the indicia are retrieved from the buffer. Thus, Moh's teachings contain the elements of the recited claim (accounting and generating the indicium), but they are connected in a rearranged order. It is the Examiner's position that when the difference between the claimed invention and the prior art is that the prior art does not disclose elements or parts in the particular configuration as the claimed invention, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to shift the location of those elements or parts. See *In re Japikse*, 181 F.2d 1019, 86 USPQ 70 (CCPA 1950) (Claims to a hydraulic power press which read on the prior art except with regard to the position of the starting switch were held unpatentable because shifting the position of the starting switch would not have modified the operation of the device.); *In re Kuhle*, 526 F.2d 553, 188 USPQ7 (CCPA 1975) (the particular placement of a contact in a conductivity measuring device was held to be an obvious matter of design choice). However, "The mere fact that a worker in the art could rearrange the parts of the reference device to meet the terms of the claims on appeal is not by itself sufficient to support a finding of obviousness. The prior art must provide a motivation or reason for the worker in the art, without the benefit of

appellant's specification, to make the necessary changes in the reference device." *Ex parte Chicago Rawhide Mfg. Co.*, 223 USPQ 351, 353 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1984). Moh notes that additional modifications will readily occur to those skilled in the art and such modifications may be made without departing from the spirit or scope of the mail processing apparatus and system. Moreover, it would have been desirable to shift the location of the accounting function to when the indicium is removed from the buffer in order to charge a customer for a generated indicium that is ready to print on a mailpiece. This eliminates the problem of charging a customer when there is uncertainty as to whether an indicium will be generated or processed at a later time, i.e. due to a mailing machine that is inoperable or ineffective.

8. Moh does not explicitly teach storing a plurality of indicia.
9. Bailey teaches storing a plurality of indicia (Bailey: col. 2, lines 43-46; a plurality of different country indicium are stored).
10. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the method and security device of Moh to have included storing a plurality of indicia as taught by Bailey for the advantage of simplifying the accounting procedure for mailpieces that relate to different currencies (Bailey: col. 2, lines 47-55). Moreover, storing a plurality of indicia would allow for a quicker retrieval of indicia at a later time. This would result in a more efficient mail handling system.
11. **As per claims 3 and 18**, Moh further teaches wherein each of the indicium data includes a value from the at least one register (Moh: col. 5, lines 7-10, 18-21, and 30-41, "shift register").
12. **As per claims 4 and 19**, Moh does not teach wherein the at least one register includes an ascending register and a descending register.

13. Bailey teaches wherein the at least one register includes an ascending register and a descending register (Bailey: col. 4, lines 1-5).

14. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the method and system of Moh in view of Bailey to have included wherein the at least one register includes an ascending register and a descending register as taught by Bailey for the advantage maintaining an accurate record of postal transactions.

15. **As per claims 5 and 20,** Moh does not teach wherein the at least one register includes a piece count register.

16. Bailey teaches wherein the at least one register includes a piece count register (Bailey: col. 4, lines 15-17).

17. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the method and system of Moh in view of Bailey to have included wherein the at least one register includes a piece count register as taught by Bailey for the advantage maintaining an accurate record of postal transactions.

18. **As per claims 6 and 21,** Moh does not teach generating subsequent indicia based on what values of the ascending and descending registers would be if previous indicia had been accounted for.

19. Bailey teaches generating subsequent indicia based on what values of the ascending and descending registers would be if previous indicia had been accounted for (Bailey: col. 4, lines 1-22).

20. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the method and system of Moh in view of Bailey to have included

generating subsequent indicia based on what values of the ascending and descending registers would be if previous indicia had been accounted for as taught by Bailey for the advantage maintaining an accurate record of postal transactions.

21. **As per claims 7 and 22**, Moh further teaches if a new postage value is set, the method further comprises: erasing all indicia stored in the buffer (Moh: col. 4, lines 60-64 and col. 5, lines 25-27 – The Examiner notes, a new postage value request for a particular indicium overwrites any postage value that is previously stored on the buffer.).

22. **As per claims 8 and 23**, Moh further teaches the buffer is a first-in, first-out buffer (Moh: col. 5, line 5).

23. **As per claim 11**, Moh further teaches wherein each of the indicium includes an image, and using the indicium to evidence postage further comprises: printing the image on the mail piece (Moh: col. 3, lines 35-40 and col. 4, lines 60-64).

24. **As per claim 12**, Moh further teaches using the indicium to provide evidence of postage further comprises: generating an image; and printing the image on the mail piece (Moh: col. 3, lines 35-40 and col. 4, lines 60-64).

25. **As per claim 13**, Moh further teaches combining the indicium with other information to generate the image (Moh: col. 5, lines 49-64).

26. **As per claim 24**, Moh teaches a mailing machine comprising:
a printer for printing an indicium on a mail piece (Moh: Figure 1, “45”; col. 5, lines 38-41);
a controller coupled to the printer (Moh: Figure 1, “9”);

a buffer (Moh: col. 3, lines 39-41; col. 5, lines 4-10, “First In First Out memory device”); and

a security device coupled to the controller (Moh: Figure 1, “37”; col. 5, lines 1-8), the security device including at least one register and a processor coupled to the at least one register (Moh: Figure 1; col. 5, lines 4-10), the processor generating a first indicium based on a postage value (Moh: col. 5, lines 18-21) and storing the first indicium in the buffer (Moh: col. 3, lines 39-41; col. 5, lines 4-10 and 25-27), the processor continuously generating in immediate succession a plurality of subsequent indicium data until the buffer is full or a new postage value is set (Moh: col. 3, lines 49-54; col. 6, lines 49-67; col. 7, lines 1-5; col. 4, lines 64-67; ASIC33 generates image data and outputs this data in a synchronous data stream.; col. 5, lines 18-27; Moh teaches continuously generating a plurality of subsequent indicium data in immediate succession, but does not explicitly teach continuously generating a plurality of subsequent indicia in immediate succession. However, it is noted that Moh teaches a mail handling system that processes a plurality of mailpieces at a high speed. As such, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified the method and security device of Moh to have included continuously generating a plurality of subsequent indicia in immediate succession for the advantage of processing mail more efficiently.), the processor, upon request to provide one of the indicium (Moh: col. 5, lines 38-41; col. 6, lines 4-34), retrieving one of the indicium previously stored in the buffer and accounting for the postage value from the at least one register for the indicium retrieved from the buffer (Moh: col. 4, lines 56-60, col. 5, lines 7-10, 21-25, and 30-41),

wherein the indicium is used to provide evidence of postage that is printed on the mail piece by the printer (Moh: col. 3, lines 30-33; col. 5, lines 48-49).

27. Moh teaches accounting for an indicium prior to generating the indicium (Moh: col. 5, lines 20-25). However, the claim recites generating indicia without accounting and accounting for the indicia at a subsequent time when the indicia are retrieved from the buffer. Thus, Moh's teachings contain the elements of the recited claim (accounting and generating the indicium), but they are connected in a rearranged order. It is the Examiner's position that when the difference between the claimed invention and the prior art is that the prior art does not disclose elements or parts in the particular configuration as the claimed invention, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to shift the location of those elements or parts. See *In re Japikse*, 181 F.2d 1019, 86 USPQ 70 (CCPA 1950) (Claims to a hydraulic power press which read on the prior art except with regard to the position of the starting switch were held unpatentable because shifting the position of the starting switch would not have modified the operation of the device.); *In re Kuhle*, 526 F.2d 553, 188 USPQ7 (CCPA 1975) (the particular placement of a contact in a conductivity measuring device was held to be an obvious matter of design choice). However, "The mere fact that a worker in the art could rearrange the parts of the reference device to meet the terms of the claims on appeal is not by itself sufficient to support a finding of obviousness. The prior art must provide a motivation or reason for the worker in the art, without the benefit of appellant's specification, to make the necessary changes in the reference device." *Ex parte Chicago Rawhide Mfg. Co.*, 223 USPQ 351, 353 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1984). Moh notes that additional modifications will readily occur to those skilled in the art and such modifications may be made without departing from the spirit or scope of the mail processing apparatus and system.

Moreover, it would have been desirable to shift the location of the accounting function to when the indicium is removed from the buffer in order to charge a customer for a generated indicium that is ready to print on a mailpiece. This eliminates the problem of charging a customer when there is uncertainty as to whether an indicium will be generated or processed at a later time, i.e. due to a mailing machine that is inoperable or ineffective.

28. Moh does not explicitly teach storing a plurality of indicia.
29. Bailey teaches storing a plurality of indicia (Bailey: col. 2, lines 43-46; a plurality of different country indicium are stored).
30. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the mailing machine of Moh to have included storing a plurality of indicia as taught by Bailey for the advantage of simplifying the accounting procedure for mailpieces that relate to different currencies (Bailey: col. 2, lines 47-55). Moreover, storing a plurality of indicia would allow for a quicker retrieval of indicia at a later time. This would result in a more efficient mail handling system.
31. **As per claim 26**, Moh further teaches wherein each of the indicium data includes a value from the at least one register (Moh: col. 5, lines 7-10, 18-21, and 30-41, “shift register”).
32. **As per claim 27**, Moh does not teach wherein the at least one register includes an ascending register and a descending register.
33. Bailey teaches wherein the at least one register includes an ascending register and a descending register (col. 4, lines 1-5).
34. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the system of Moh in view of Bailey to have included wherein the at

least one register includes an ascending register and a descending register as taught by Bailey for the advantage maintaining an accurate record of postal transactions.

35. **As per claim 28**, Moh does not teach wherein the at least one register includes a piece count register.

36. Bailey teaches wherein the at least one register includes a piece count register (Bailey: col. 4, lines 15-17).

37. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the system of Moh in view of Bailey to have included wherein the at least one register includes a piece count register as taught by Bailey for the advantage maintaining an accurate record of postal transactions.

38. **As per claim 29**, Moh does not teach generating subsequent indicia based on what values of the ascending and descending registers would be if previous indicia had been accounted for.

39. Bailey teaches generating subsequent indicia based on what values of the ascending and descending registers would be if previous indicia had been accounted for (Bailey: col. 4, lines 1-22).

40. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the system of Moh in view of Bailey to have included generating subsequent indicia based on what values of the ascending and descending registers would be if previous indicia had been accounted for as taught by Bailey for the advantage maintaining an accurate record of postal transactions.

41. **As per claim 30**, Moh further teaches if a new postage value is set, the processor erases all indicia stored in the buffer (Moh: col. 4, lines 60-64 and col. 5, lines 25-27 – The Examiner

notes, a new postage value request for a particular indicium overwrites any postage value that is previously stored on the buffer.).

42. **As per claim 31**, Moh further teaches the buffer is a first-in, first-out buffer (Moh: col. 5, line 5).

43. **As per claim 32**, Moh further teaches the buffer is integral with the security device (Moh: col. 5, lines 4-8).

44. Claims 2, 17, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moh et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,004,048 in view of Bailey et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,154,734 and further in view of Gilham, U.S. Publication No. 2002/0046183.

45. **As per claims 2, 17, and 25**, Moh in view of Bailey does not teach wherein each of the indicium includes a digital signature.

46. Gilham teaches wherein each of the indicium includes a digital signature (Gilham: paragraphs 0023-0024).

47. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the method and system of Moh to have included wherein each of the indicium includes a digital signature as taught by Gilham for the advantage of allowing for the verification of the authenticity of the indicium (Gilman: paragraph 0023).

48. Claims 9-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moh et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,004,048 in view of Bailey et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,154,734 and further in view of Carroll et al., U.S. Publication No. 2002/0083018.

49. **As per claim 9**, Moh in view of Bailey does not teach receiving the postage value from an operator.

50. Carroll teaches receiving the postage value from an operator (Carroll: paragraph 0033, “step 420”).

51. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified method of Moh in view of Bailey to have included receiving the postage value from an operator as taught by Carroll for the advantage of processing mail more efficiently by eliminating the time necessary to calculate a postage value when the postage value is known.

52. **As per claim 10**, Moh further teaches setting the postage value (Moh: col. 3, lines 35-36 and col. 4, lines 62-64) and a weighing module (Moh: col. 4, line 22). Moh in view of Bailey does not teach setting the postage value based on a weight of the mail piece.

53. Carroll teaches setting the postage value based on a weight of the mail piece (Carroll: paragraph 0004).

54. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the method of Moh in view of Bailey to have included setting the postage value based on a weight of the mail piece as taught by Carroll for the advantage of determining postage values accurately.

55. Claims 14-15 and 33-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moh et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,004,048 in view of Bailey et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,154,734 and further in view of Athens et al., U.S. Publication No. 2003/0177104.

56. **As per claims 14 and 33,** Moh teaches a method and a mailing machine that provides evidence of postage for mail pieces comprising:

generating indicium data required to create an indicium that provides evidence of postage (Moh: col. 5, lines 18-21);

storing the indicium data in a buffer (Moh: col. 3, lines 39-41; col. 5, lines 4-10 and 25-27, “First In First Out memory device”);

generating additional indicium data for a plurality of subsequent indicia in immediate succession (Moh: col. 4, lines 64-67; ASIC33 generates image data and outputs this data in a synchronous data stream.; col. 5, lines 18-27; Moh teaches continuously generating a plurality of subsequent indicium data in immediate succession, but does not explicitly teach generating a plurality of subsequent indicia in immediate succession. However, it is noted that Moh teaches a mail handling system that processes a plurality of mailpieces at a high speed. As such, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified the method and mailing machine of Moh to have included generating a plurality of subsequent indicia in immediate succession for the advantage of processing mail more efficiently.) and storing the indicium data in the buffer until the buffer is full (Moh: col. 3, lines 49-54; col. 6, lines 49-67; col. 7, lines 1-5);

determining if a mail piece is present in the mailing machine (Moh: Figure 1, “11”; col. 6, lines 1-4);

if a mail piece is present, retrieving one of the indicium data from the buffer (Moh: col. 5, lines 38-41; col. 6, lines 4-34);

setting a postage value for the mail piece (Moh: col. 3, lines 35-40; col. 4, lines 62-64);

accounting for the postage value from at least one register in the mailing machine for the indicium data retrieved from the buffer (Moh: col. 4, lines 56-60; col. 5, lines 7-10, 21-25, and 30-41, “shift register”; col. 6, lines 49-64); and

using the indicium data to provide evidence of postage for the mail piece (Moh: col. 3, lines 30-33; col. 5, lines 48-49).

57. Moh teaches accounting for an indicium prior to generating the indicium (Moh: col. 5, lines 20-25). However, the claim recites generating indicia without accounting and accounting for the indicia at a subsequent time when the indicia are retrieved from the buffer. Thus, Moh’s teachings contain the elements of the recited claim (accounting and generating the indicium), but they are connected in a rearranged order. It is the Examiner’s position that when the difference between the claimed invention and the prior art is that the prior art does not disclose elements or parts in the particular configuration as the claimed invention, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to shift the location of those elements or parts. See *In re Japikse*, 181 F.2d 1019, 86 USPQ 70 (CCPA 1950) (Claims to a hydraulic power press which read on the prior art except with regard to the position of the starting switch were held unpatentable because shifting the position of the starting switch would not have modified the operation of the device.); *In re Kuhle*, 526 F.2d 553, 188 USPQ7 (CCPA 1975) (the particular placement of a contact in a conductivity measuring device was held to be an obvious matter of design choice). However, “The mere fact that a worker in the art could rearrange the parts of the reference device to meet the terms of the claims on appeal is not by itself sufficient to support a finding of obviousness. The prior art must provide a motivation or reason for the worker in the art, without the benefit of appellant’s specification, to make the necessary changes in the reference device.” *Ex parte*

Chicago Rawhide Mfg. Co., 223 USPQ 351, 353 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1984). Moh notes that additional modifications will readily occur to those skilled in the art and such modifications may be made without departing from the spirit or scope of the mail processing apparatus and system. Moreover, it would have been desirable to shift the location of the accounting function to when the indicium is removed from the buffer in order to charge a customer for a generated indicium that is ready to print on a mailpiece. This eliminates the problem of charging a customer when there is uncertainty as to whether an indicium will be generated or processed at a later time, i.e. due to a mailing machine that is inoperable or ineffective.

58. Moh does not explicitly teach storing a plurality of indicia; a partial computation of a digital signature; computing the digital signature using the indicium data and the postage value; and providing the digital signature as part of an indicium that provides evidence of postage for the mail piece.

59. Bailey teaches storing a plurality of indicia (Bailey: col. 2, lines 43-46; a plurality of different country indicium are stored).

60. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the method and mailing machine of Moh to have included storing a plurality of indicia as taught by Bailey for the advantage of simplifying the accounting procedure for mailpieces that relate to different currencies (Bailey: col. 2, lines 47-55). Moreover, storing a plurality of indicia would allow for a quicker retrieval of indicia at a later time. This would result in a more efficient mail handling system.

61. Athens teaches a partial computation of a digital signature (Athens: paragraph 0009, “partial signature calculation”); computing the digital signature using the indicium data and the

postage value (Athens: paragraphs 0017-0018); and providing the digital signature as part of an indicium that provides evidence of postage for the mail piece (Athens: paragraphs 0017-0018).

62. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the method and mailing machine of Moh in view of Bailey to have included a partial computation of a digital signature; computing the digital signature using the indicium data and the postage value; and providing the digital signature as part of an indicium that provides evidence of postage for the mail piece as taught by Athens for the advantage of providing a method that optimizes the throughput of a mailing machine by reducing the overall amount of time necessary for the PSD to generate the indicium and calculate the digital signature for each mail piece (Athens: paragraph 0008).

63. **As per claims 15 and 34**, Moh further teaches generating an indicium data before processing of the mail pieces begins (Moh: col. 3, lines 35-40; col. 4, lines 60-64; col. 5, lines 15-41).

Conclusion

The Examiner has cited particular portions of the references as applied to the claims above for the convenience of the Applicant. Although the specified citations are representative of the teachings in the art and are applied to the specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may apply as well. It is respectfully requested that the Applicant, in preparing the responses, fully consider the references in entirety as potentially teaching all or part of the claimed invention, as well as the context of the passage as taught by the prior art or disclosed by the Examiner.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Eric Liou whose telephone number is (571)270-1359. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 9:00-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Hayes can be reached on 571-272-6708. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Eric Liou/
Examiner, Art Unit 3628

/John W Hayes/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3628